

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-7 are pending in this application. Reconsideration of the application based upon the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives by Examiner Wollschlager at the interview held April 17, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

Entry of the attached Declaration is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the Declaration: (a) places the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfies a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The attached Declaration is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is in response to arguments raised during the interview held April 17, 2008. Entry of the Declaration is thus respectfully requested.

**I. Objection to Amendment to Drawings**

The Office Action objects to the Amendment to the Drawings, originally filed April 30, 2007, under 35 U.S.C. §132(a) as introducing new matter into the disclosure. The Office Action asserts that this objection may be overcome by pointing to the location in the original disclosure where support for this amendment may be found.

As explained in the attached Declaration, at least paragraph [0015] of the specification supports the addition of amended Figure 2. Paragraph [0015] discloses that to reduce filament bundle convergence, which results in the filaments being pressed together or suffering damage from scraping along the edge of the slot or diaphragm, it is preferred to provide the bottom of the coagulation bath with an opening. Original Figure 2 does not have

any means by which the coagulated filament can exit or be removed from the coagulation bath. Therefore, the filament will accumulate at the bottom of the coagulation bath and become pressed together or suffer damage. Additionally, if the slot or diaphragm is not positioned at the bottom of the coagulation bath, the filament will suffer damage from scraping along the edge of the slot or diaphragm as it exits the coagulation bath. Thus, paragraph [0015] of the specification supports amended Figure 2.

As further explained in the attached Declaration, paragraph [0001] also supports the addition of amended Figure 2. Paragraph [0001] of the originally filed application describes the claimed method for manufacturing filaments. Paragraph [0001] recites that after being extruded, the filament travels through a slot or opening, the edges thereof being formed by plates having upper and lower sides. Paragraph [0001] does not recite that the filament then continues to travel through the coagulation bath and through a separate discharge opening. Thus, the discharge opening corresponds to the opening of the slot or diaphragm.

Additionally, paragraph [0001] recites that the filament passes through the edges of the slot or diaphragm. Paragraph [0001] does not recite that the filament also passes through the edges of a separate discharge opening. Thus, the discharge opening must correspond to the edges of the slot or diaphragm. Since the discharge opening must be located at the bottom of the coagulation bath (application, paragraph [0003]), it follows that the slot or diaphragm must also be located at the bottom of the coagulation bath.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

## **II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112**

### **a. First Paragraph**

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Office Action asserts that, in claims 1 and 2, the limitation requiring that the slot or diaphragm be positioned at the bottom of the coagulation bath, as shown in replacement Figure 2, does not appear to be supported by the original disclosure. As discussed above, and in the attached Declaration, paragraphs [0001], [0003] and [0015] of the specification support the amendment to Figure 2.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

**b. Second Paragraph**

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Office Action also asserts that claims 1 and 2 are indefinite because the recitation, "wherein the projection of the slot or diaphragm has substantially the same size and shape as the projection of the spinning field" is unclear as to its limiting effect. The Office Action further asserts that "through 'projection' very small items can be made to look large and very large items can be made to look small." However, the definition of "projection" asserted by the Office Action is not the intended definition of "projection." According to The American Heritage College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, "projection" is defined as "the image of a geometric figure reproduced on a line, plane or surface." This is the definition of projection intended by the specification. Furthermore, this definition does not include the limitation that "very small items can be made to look large and very large items can be made to look small." Thus, the intent is to mean that the slot/diaphragm and the spinning field have substantially the same size and shape.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

**III. 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Meerman et al. ("Meerman", U.S. Patent 5,945,054) in view of Roberts (U.S. Patent 4,193,962). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As discussed above, and in the attached Declaration, the specification supports amended Figure 2. Therefore, the slot or diaphragm must be positioned at the bottom of the coagulation bath.

Meerman teaches that the spinning solution is spun through an air gap with the flat bottom of the coagulation bath being provided with an opening positioned directly beneath a spinning section (Meerman, col. 5, lines 3-9). Meerman further teaches that if use is made of more than two spinning sections and a corresponding number of discharge openings in the bottom of the coagulation bath, then an embodiment may be used where the edges of adjacent openings are at different heights (Meerman, col. 3, lines 13-15).

However, Meerman does not teach or suggest that a line through the center of the spinning field, and perpendicular to the upper sides, is located at a distance (d) from a parallel line through the center of the slot or diaphragm, wherein the vertical projection of the slot or diaphragm has substantially the same size and shape as the vertical projection of the spinning field, and wherein the plane of the upper side of one of the plates has a shorter distance to the center of the spinning field than the plane of the upper side of the other of the plates, and the line through the center of the spinning field has a smaller distance to the edge of one of the plates than to the edge of the other of the plates. Meerman further fails to teach or suggest a slot or diaphragm positioned at the bottom of the coagulation bath.

Roberts does not overcome the deficiencies of Meerman. At most, Roberts discloses guide bars, which guide filaments that ultimately exit the tank over a wiper bar (Roberts, col. 3, lines 46-48, Figure 1). Thus, Roberts does not teach or suggest that the filaments leave the

tank by way of a slot or diaphragm at the bottom of the coagulation bath. Roberts further does not teach or suggest the edges of the slot or diaphragm being formed by plates with upper sides and lower sides.

Claims 3-7 depend from independent claim 2. Because Meerman and Roberts fail to teach or suggest, alone or in combination, the features recited in independent claim 2, dependant claims 3-7 are patentable for at least the reasons that claim 2 is patentable, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, any combination of the cited references fails to teach or suggest a method for manufacturing filaments from an optically anisotropic spinning solution or an air gap spinning device, as claimed. The references thus would not have rendered obvious the claimed invention.

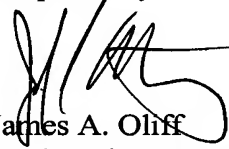
Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachment:

Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.132 - Dr. Stephen J. Picken

Date: April 28, 2008

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